have not had occasion to observe, but diversity of patterns rather than standardization characterizes the nation as a whole.

We have seen forty-eight state capitols. There is, of course, a great similarity in their domes and columns, but nearly every capitol houses its own historical museum and Hall of Fame, with statues of local great men unknown beyond the state's borders. Each state has civil and penal laws of its own, its own tax system, labor legislation, social security programs and political tradition. Each state pretends to be a republic (or a commonwealth) with a legislature, president (governor), cabinet of ministers, often complete with a minister of state. This system goes much further than decentralization of government in most European countries. Even in Congressional elections, local issues are often of decisive significance. Comparing political life in the United States with that of Europe, we were surprised to notice how little control the national parties have over local primaries.

Political decentralization tends to diminish conformity in thinking and feeling in this country. If there is a general tendency to be like the Joneses, an individual tries to imitate the Joneses of his own parish rather than some rigid pattern equally venerated throughout the nation.

Particularism also prevails in the religious life of the country—innumerable denominations, tiny houses of prayer everywhere, few large churches, very few cathedrals dominating the skyline of a city, as in Europe, Latin America, or Canada.

I do not know whence came the concept of the United States as a melting pot of races and nationalities, but this term fails to describe properly what America has done to the peoples from old countries. The function of a melting pot is to destroy the identity of the raw materials and obtain a new stuff that meets certain specifications. This may be the Nazi idea of absorbing immigrants, but such an amalgamation has never been demanded of the immigrants to this country. Here we have met the Irish and Dutch, French and Italians, Poles and Lithuanians, Norwegians, Scots, Germans, and Russians. All of them have brought their language, religion, and national customs with them. Those who settled in compact groups have preserved national characteristics through many generations, but do not feel themselves to be the less American. American society is a product of integration rather than melting. It reminds me of a multicolored mosaic. National groups and denominations are the stones in the mosaic, each with its own color; combined, they form a picture. The design would have lost its brilliance if the stones had been subject to melting and reduced to uniformity.

The contrast between the United States and the countries of Europe is largely that of age. Here people look about them with